



# STUDENT ASSESSMENT POLICY 2018

On the recommendation of the Senate, the Council of the Wayamba University of Sri Lanka, as the governing authority of the Wayamba University of Sri Lanka, by resolution adopts the following policy.

Dated: 28.06.2018

Last amended: Not applicable

Signature: Signed

Position: Vice Chancellor, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka

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## PART 1 - PRELIMINERIES

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### 1 Name of policy

Student Assessment Policy 2018

### 2 Commencement

This policy commences on 01.10.2018.

### 3 Policy is binding

This policy binds the University, staff, students and affiliates.

### 4 Statement of intent

This policy:

- (a) brings together into a single document all the policies with regard to University's approach to assessment.
- (b) is meant to protect the students from excessive workloads, and to ensure that all students are treated equally.
- (c) supports students' development and progressive demonstration of graduate attributes.
- (d) shall apply to all undergraduate and postgraduate courses, offered by the University, that are evaluated by any form of assessment.
- (e) shall be applied, appropriately modified, to courses of less than a 15 week duration (SLQL 4 or below).
- (f) ensures that students may come forward in cases of perceived violation of the Student Assessment Policy. The matter may, as appropriate, be confidentially referred to the Vice Chancellor / Dean to ensure the spirit of the Student Assessment Policy is respected.

### 5 Application

This policy applies to:

- (a) staff and affiliates;
- (b) all students enrolled in a coursework award study programmes or undertaking coursework while enrolled in a research degree.

### 6 Definitions

Assessment	Any form of student activity in a Course to which a grade is to be granted by the academic member.
Assignment	Any form of Assessment other than examinations.
Course	Any educational activity for which credit may be earned by a student.



Deferred Assessment	Assessment provided to a student who for documented legitimate reasons could not complete a Course requirement by its due date.
Examiner	The member of the academic staff (including contract academic staff) who is responsible for the mode of assessment and the grades to be granted in a Course.
Examination	The final examination of a course, which is held during the formal examination period

## **PART 2 – PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES**

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### **7 General**

- (1) Assessment is the process of forming a judgment about the quality and extent of student achievement or performance.
- (2) The aims of assessment include:
  - improving the quality of the curriculum (courses and programs);
  - evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching process and facilitating continuing improvement;
  - improving and promoting subsequent learning through feedback that is clear, informative, timely and relevant;
  - formally certifying achievements for external audiences; and
  - accountability to the University, accrediting bodies, employers and the wider community.
- (3) Assessment methods may take a variety of forms. The key criterion for choice among methods should be appropriateness to the learning outcomes.

### **8 Assessment principles and their implementation**

- (1) The following principles apply to assessment at the University.
  - (i) Assessment practices must advance student learning.
  - (ii) Assessment practices must be communicated clearly to students and staff.
  - (iii) Assessment practices must be valid and fair.
  - (iv) Assessment practices must be continuously improved and updated.
- (2) The University's assessment principles will be implemented in accordance with Examination By-Laws.

### **9 Principle 1: Assessment practices must advance student learning**

This principle expects that:

- (1) assessment practices align with goals, context, learning activities and learning outcomes.
- (2) a variety of assessment tasks are used while ensuring that student and staff workloads are considered.
- (3) assessment tasks reflect increasing levels of complexity across a programme and facilitate enquiry-based learning.



- (4) constructive, timely and respectful feedback develops students' skills of self and peer evaluation and guides the development of future student work.

## 10 Principle 2: Assessment practices must be communicated clearly to students and staff

This principle requires that:

- (1) during the first week of class, students shall be provided Course Outlines (i.e. Course Overviews) which communicate the purposes, timing, weighting and extent of assessment in sufficient detail to allow students to plan their approach to assessment. In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the Course in-charge's control, the evaluation scheme in a course is subject to change, provided that there be timely communications to the students regarding the change.
- (2) course outlines explain the rationale for the selection of assessment tasks (e.g. quiz) in relation to learning outcomes.
- (3) all staff involved in teaching a course unit share a common understanding of assessment practices.
- (4) the process of marking and of combining individual task marks is explicitly explained in the unit outline.

## 11 Principle 3: Assessment practices must be valid and fair

This principle requires that:

- (1) assessment tasks are authentic and appropriate to disciplinary and or professional context.
- (2) assessment incorporates rigorous academic standards related to the discipline(s) and is based on pre-determined, clearly articulated criteria with which students actively engage.
- (3) students' assessment will be evaluated solely on the basis of students' achievement against criteria and standards specified to align with learning outcomes.
- (4) assessment practices address issues of equity and inclusiveness to accommodate and build upon the diversity of the student body so as not to disadvantage any student.
  - a. There should be more than one assessment for each course.
  - b. In courses where failure to complete a specific assignment or activity, or failure to achieve a passing grade for that assignment or activity would prevent the student from passing the course, this stipulation must be stated clearly in the course outline. The assignment or activity in question, if it is assigned a percentage value, must be worth no less than 5% of the final course grade.
  - c. Students with disabilities have the right to request reasonable facilities in fulfilling the assessment requirements in a course in accordance with the WUSL Specially-abled Policy.
  - d. Students, who produce a valid documented reasons (such as illness or family tragedy), cannot submit a required assessment in a course on providing satisfactory proof of their inability, may apply in accordance with the Faculty procedures relating to Deferred Assessments for permission to undertake a Deferred Assessment or receive another type of assessment, provided the application is made within a timeframe that



is in accordance with Faculty procedures. *(Note: This is not applicable to end semester examinations of the undergraduate studies).*

- e. Students who without a valid documented reason fail to submit an assessment shall receive a grade of F (Fail) or Incomplete (I) for the Assessment.
- f. Students who have already submitted an assessment cannot subsequently request for the assessment to be deferred.

## **12 Principle 4: Assessment practices must be continuously improved and updated**

This principle requires that:

- (1) assessment tasks and outcomes are moderated through academic peer review and used to inform subsequent practice.
- (2) assessments are regularly updated to ensure alignment with programme learning outcomes or graduate qualities.
- (3) professional development opportunities that are related to design, implementation and moderation of assessment are provided to staff.

## **13 Language of Assessment**

Students are permitted to use English only in completing any form of assessment other than assessments in courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.

## **14 Result Grades**

- (1) The University will award result grades as set out by the Faculties for their study programmes.
- (2) The grades of distinction and credit (or equivalent) indicate work of a standard higher than that required for a pass in certain study programmes.
- (3) A student who completes a course for which only a pass or fail result is available will be recorded as having satisfied requirements.

## **15 Academic concession due to illness, injury or mishap**

- (1) The Faculty is committed to supporting students in their academic pursuits. Students may request academic concession in circumstances that may adversely affect their attendance or performance in a course unit or programme. Generally, such circumstances fall into one of two categories, conflicting responsibilities and unforeseen events.
  - (i) Conflicting responsibilities include, but may not be limited to: representing the University, the Province or the Country in a competition or performance; observing a religious rite; working to support oneself or one's family; and having responsibility for the care of a family member and or any other situation accepted to the Faculty Board and the Senate.
  - (ii) Unforeseen events include, but may not be limited to: ill health or other personal challenges that arise during a term.



- (2) Students who intend to, or who as a result of circumstance must, request academic concession must notify through their Head of Department to the Dean as specified in the relevant section(s) of Faculty Student Handbook.
- (3) Special consideration is provided in circumstances where well-attested illness, injury or mishap occurs during a semester or at the time of an examination. It is an academic judgement which depends on the nature of the illness, mishap or injury and its impact in relation to assessment or examination.
- (4) Students with conflicting responsibilities have a duty to arrange their course schedules so as to avoid as much as possible any conflicts with course requirements. Students with such responsibilities are also required to discuss with their course instructor(s) and mentors at the start of each semester, or as soon as a conflicting responsibility arises, any accommodation that may be requested. Instructors may not be able to comply with all such requests especially if the academic standards and integrity of the course or programme could be compromised.
- (5) Students who, because of unforeseen events, are absent during the semester and are unable to complete tests or other graded work (continuous assessment only), should normally discuss with their instructors how they can make up for missed work, according to written guidelines given them at the start of the course.
- (6) The academic concessions that may be granted include the following: permission to drop a course after the normal deadlines and/or deferment from the course. When student is ready to continue the academic work, documentation from a medical or counselling professional sufficient to satisfy the University that the student is ready to continue studies may be required before the student will be re-enrolled.
- (7) All requests for special consideration must be genuine and made in good faith. Attempts to use special consideration as a means of gaining an unfair advantage in an assessment must be rejected.
- (8) Making a request for special consideration that is not genuine or in good faith may lead to disciplinary action against a student.
- (9) A request for special consideration does not guarantee that the request will be granted.
- (10) Special consideration **must not be** granted for:
  - (i) balancing workloads from other units of study, disciplines or faculties;
  - (ii) Information and communications technology-related problems, except where they could not have been prevented, avoided or the effects minimised by reasonable diligence by the student; or
  - (iii) Jury service, military service, national sporting, religious or cultural commitments or other unforeseen events for which special arrangements may be provided in accordance with this policy.
- (11) Special consideration granted to one or more students should not disadvantage other students.

## 16 Student with a disability

- (1) Students with a permanent or temporary disability who have registered with the University's Welfare Division, and have satisfied the University's requirements for



supporting documentation, may be eligible for reasonable adjustments and or accessible examination and assessment arrangements.

- (2) Welfare Division will determine the student's eligibility for adjustments and inform the student and faculty of the required reasonable adjustments.
- (3) Students wishing to apply for accessible examination and assessment conditions must make their application through Dean of the Faculty within specified timeframes.
- (4) Accessible examination and assessment conditions include, but are not limited to:
  - (i) extra time for reading, writing, resting or toilet breaks;
  - (ii) examination papers in alternative formats;
  - (iii) use of assistive technology;
  - (iv) using a designated room and experienced supervisors;
  - (v) using a separate room with assistive technology;
  - (vi) re-scheduling and or spacing of examinations into the deferred examination period.

## **17 Review of Assessments by Student:**

- (1) Subject to reasonable administrative arrangements and provided the request is made by a student within a reasonable time after the notification of a mark, every student has a right to consult any written assessment for which he/she has received a mark and a right to receive an explanation of this assessment from the Instructor/Examiner.
- (2) Provisions shall be made for undergraduate students to submit requests for verification of their examination marks and grades if they wish to do so, particularly for the end-semester examinations and final examinations as per UGC circular no. 978 (2012)

## **PART 3 – CONDUCTING EXAMINATIONS**

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### **18 Written assignments other than examinations**

- (1) Submission of Written Assignments other than Examinations:
  - (i) Academic members shall ensure that Students are provided with sufficient time to complete in-term written Assignments prior to the commencement of the final examination period.
  - (ii) Unless otherwise provided by the Unit/Faculty, the due date for in-term written Assignments shall be no later than the last day of classes as specified in the University calendar.
  - (iii) Penalties for late submitted assignments must be stated in the course outline.
- (2) Plagiarism:
  - (i) When the University has reasonable cause to suspect that a student has represented the work of another person as his or her own, the University may take any reasonable means to verify the originality of the work including the use of text-matching software.



- (ii) Necessary actions must be taken as specified in Academic Honesty Policy.

## 19 Examinations

### (1) Pre-requisites to Examination:

A Student's right to take an examination is contingent on:

- (i) being registered in the Course;
- (ii) being able to produce valid student identification before and during the examination; and
- (iii) the fulfilment of any course requirements (e.g. Required percentage of attendance, required marks from continuous assessment), for taking of the examination.

### (2) Nature:

Examinations shall be "closed book" examinations unless otherwise specified by the Instructor.

### (3) Content:

The content of the examinations in a Course shall be changed each semester.

### (4) Language of Examination:

Examination questions shall be set in the language English in which:

- (i) the Course is taught; or
- (ii) the Student's proficiency is being assessed.

### (5) Invigilation/supervision:

All written examinations other than take-home examinations shall be invigilated by the Instructor or designate, or by an individual appointed by the University.

### (6) Use of Computers, Equipment, Tools or Aids, Electronic or Other devices by Students:

- (i) Use of computers and other equipment, tools or aids, electronic or other devices, during the course of an examination is prohibited unless expressly permitted by the Instructor/Department/Faculty.
- (ii) Where the use of items referred to in section 19. 6 (i) is permitted in the course of an examination, students shall comply with all restrictions imposed on such use.

### (7) Confidentiality of Examination Questions:

All examination questions are confidential and shall be returned to the lecturer unless otherwise determined by the lecturer/Unit/Department/Faculty (confidential papers may be retained).

### (8) Scheduling and Weighting:

Final examinations in regularly scheduled Courses shall be held in the period designated by the Faculty for such examinations,

- (i) If a final examination is offered in a Course, it shall be worth **at least 25%** of the Course grade.
- (ii) The maximum weight of a final examination in a regularly scheduled Course shall be **no more than 75%** of the Course.
- (iii) Should written examinations in a regularly scheduled Course contribute 50% or more to the Course grade, one of the examinations shall be held during the final examination period.





- (iv) Faculties shall develop guidelines for the administration of take-home final examinations.

## (9) Procedures for conduct of examinations

The University/Faculty shall develop procedures governing the administration and conduct of examinations which shall include:

- (a) seating arrangement for students;
- (b) the time constraints on entry to and exit from an examination room;
- (c) the circumstances for, and conditions under, which students may leave and re-enter an examination room;
- (d) the attire not to be a hindrance for student identification during the examination.
- (e) the personal items (electronic or other), if any, to which students may have access during the taking of an examination;
- (f) the interruption of any examination by an external event;
- (g) the administration of multiple-choice examinations.
- (h) time durations, structure of the examination paper

## 20 Faculty student assessment procedures

Faculties may develop student assessment procedures (summative and formative) provided they are consistent with this Policy and Examination By-Laws of WUSL.

## 21 Responsibilities for implementation of this Part

(1) **Senate** is responsible for:

- (i) ensuring that assessment practices comply with this policy; and
- (ii) ensuring that assessment practices and procedures are monitored and reviewed at the level of faculties in accordance with this policy, and that changes to assessment practices are made where appropriate as a consequence of such review.
- (iii) appointing principal examiners (setters, moderators, first and second examiners; external examiners for disciplines or courses and for the programme)

(2) **The Registrar** is responsible for:

- (i) overseeing the release of results to students; and
- (ii) overseeing the conduct of examinations.

(3) **Deans and Faculty Board** are responsible for:

- (i) ensuring that this policy is contextualized and implemented in all programmes and units for which the faculty is responsible;
- (ii) ensuring that faculty practices and standards in relation to assessment are consistent with this policy and any associated procedures; and
- (iii) appointing a responsible Co-ordinator where the teaching of a course is shared by more than one department.



- (iv) recommending the Senate principal examiners (setters, moderators, first and second examiners; external examiners for disciplines or courses and for the programme)
- (4) **Heads of Departments** are responsible for:
  - (i) ensuring that this policy is contextualized and implemented in all programmes and units for which the academic unit is responsible;
  - (ii) recommending principal examiners; and
  - (iii) appointing course in-charges / co-ordinators.
- (5) **Unit coordinators and or principal examiners** are responsible for:
  - (i) developing and implementing an assessment strategy which is consistent with this policy and any associated procedures;
  - (ii) managing the moderation of assessment design and marking to ensure the validity and reliability of assessment within the unit;
  - (iii) ensuring that assessment requirements for a unit are discussed and understood by all members of staff involved in teaching and assessment, including seasonal and casual teachers; and
  - (iv) monitoring and reflecting on student assessment outcomes and student feedback data to make changes to the assessment strategy for the unit in light of the review, as appropriate.
- (6) **Unit lecturers and tutors** are responsible for:
  - (i) assessing student work fairly, consistently and in a timely manner;
  - (ii) providing timely feedback which enables students to further improve their learning and performance wherever possible; and
  - (iii) advising students in relation to expectations relevant to specific assessment tasks.
- (7) **Students** are responsible for:
  - (i) actively engaging with assessment tasks, including carefully reading the guidance provided, spending sufficient time on the task, ensuring their work is authentic and their own (whether individual or group work) and handing work in on time;
  - (ii) actively engaging in activities designed to develop assessment literacy, including taking the initiative where appropriate (e.g. asking for clarification or advice);
  - (iii) actively engaging with and acting on feedback provided;
  - (iv) providing constructive feedback on assessment processes and tasks through student feedback mechanisms (e.g. student feedback surveys or student representation on committees); and
  - (v) becoming familiar with University Policy and Faculty procedures and acting in accordance with those policy and procedures.



## Notes

Student Assessment Policy 2018

Date adopted: 28.06.2018

Date commenced: 01.10.2018

Administrator: Senate / Registrar / Faculty Board

Review date: 30.09.2018

Rescinded documents: Not applicable

Related documents:

Specially-abled Policy

Academic Honesty Policy

SLQF

Examination By-Laws

Faculty Student Handbooks

AQEF

Course Overview / Outlines

## AMENDMENT HISTORY

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
	Not applicable	